

Kindly amend claim 1 as follows:

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1. (Thrice Amended) A piezoelectric actuator comprising: a plurality of stacked piezoelectric elements for undergoing expansion/contraction movement to vibrationally drive the piezoelectric elements in accordance with a driving signal applied thereto, each of the piezoelectric elements having the same thickness in a stacking direction of the piezoelectric elements.

Kindly add the following new claims 29-47:

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cont.

29. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 1; wherein each of the piezoelectric elements has a length extending in a direction generally perpendicular to the stacking direction, the length of at least one of the piezoelectric elements being different from the thickness thereof.

30. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 29; wherein each of the piezoelectric elements is generally quadrilateral-shaped.

31. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 29; wherein the length of the at least one piezoelectric element is greater than the thickness thereof.

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32. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 31;  
wherein each of the piezoelectric elements is generally  
quadrilateral-shaped.

33. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 1;  
wherein each of the piezoelectric elements is generally  
quadrilateral-shaped.

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34. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 1;  
wherein each of the piezoelectric elements has a length  
extending in a direction generally perpendicular to the  
stacking direction, the length of at least one of the  
piezoelectric elements being equal to the thickness thereof.

35. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 34;  
wherein the length of the at least one piezoelectric element  
is less than the length of at least one other piezoelectric  
element.

36. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 35;  
wherein the length of the at least one piezoelectric element  
is one-half the length of the at least one other piezoelectric  
element.

37. A piezoelectric actuator comprising: a  
plurality of groups of piezoelectric elements stacked in a  
stacking direction for undergoing expansion/contraction

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movement to vibrationally drive the piezoelectric elements in accordance with a driving signal applied thereto, each of the groups of piezoelectric elements extending in a longitudinal direction generally perpendicular to the stacking direction, and each piezoelectric element of at least one of the groups of piezoelectric elements having a thickness extending in the stacking direction and a length different from the thickness thereof and extending in the longitudinal direction.

38. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 37; wherein each of the groups of piezoelectric elements has a fixed end and a free end opposite to the fixed end.

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39. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 37; wherein the plurality of groups of piezoelectric elements comprises a first group of piezoelectric elements, a second group of piezoelectric elements disposed on the first group of piezoelectric elements and defining the at least one of the groups of piezoelectric elements, a third group of piezoelectric elements disposed on the second group of piezoelectric elements, and a fourth group of piezoelectric elements disposed on the second group of piezoelectric elements.

40. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 39; wherein the piezoelectric elements of the third and second

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cont.

groups of piezoelectric elements have the same thickness and length.

41. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 40; wherein the piezoelectric elements of the first and fourth groups of piezoelectric elements have the same thickness and length.

42. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 41; wherein the length of each piezoelectric element of the first and fourth groups of piezoelectric elements is one-half the length of each piezoelectric element of the second and third groups of piezoelectric elements.

43. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 42; wherein each piezoelectric element of the second and third groups of piezoelectric elements is generally rectangular shaped.

44. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 39; wherein each piezoelectric element of the first, second, third and fourth groups of piezoelectric elements is generally quadrilateral-shaped.

45. A piezoelectric actuator comprising: a cantilever body having a fixed end, a free end opposite the fixed end, and a plurality of stacked piezoelectric elements disposed between the fixed end and the free end for undergoing

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expansion/contraction movement to vibrationally drive the piezoelectric elements in accordance with a driving signal applied thereto, each of the piezoelectric elements having the same thickness in a stacking direction of the piezoelectric elements.

46. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 45; wherein the plurality of piezoelectric elements comprises a first pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements and a second pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements disposed between the first pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements.

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47. A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 46; wherein each piezoelectric element of the first and second pairs of groups of identical piezoelectric elements has a length extending in a direction generally perpendicular to the stacking direction; and wherein the length of each piezoelectric element of the first pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements is one-half the length of each piezoelectric element of the second pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements.